

## REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on March 8, 2006 has been carefully considered, and the Examiner's comments are appreciated. Claims 13-15 were previously canceled, claim 7 is withdrawn, and claims 1, 2, 16, and 22 have been amended. Therefore claims 1-6, 8-12 and 16-22 are presented for examination. No new matter has been added, with the amendments supported by the Specification, claims, and the drawings.

### Discussion of the Rejections Under 35 USC §112, second paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 8-12, and 16-22 as being indefinite because of the terms "high-strength" and/or "low-density." Applicants have removed these terms accordingly.

### Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner stated that claims 10 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections 35 USC §112, second paragraph, and include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. While the §112 rejections have been overcome as per the above discussion, the Examiner's suggestion to rewrite claims 10 and 12 have not been adopted at this time pending continued examination of the base claims and any intervening claims.

### Discussion of the Rejections Under 35 USC §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5-6, 8-9, 11, and 16-21 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 1,274,721 to Krzan.

Regarding independent claim 1, Applicants have amended the “*means for releasably securing*” limitation with the following:

*“means for releasably securing said set of rings to each other in the telescopically-extended upright configuration”*

to clarify that the telescopically extended upright configuration is maintained by releasably securing the set of rings to each other. Applicants respectfully submit that the Krzan reference does not anticipate amended claim 1 because the telescopically extended configurations of both the inner telescopic tubes (49) and the outer telescopic tubes (10-13) of Krzan are achieved and maintained by inflating and maintaining the inflation of the flexible sac/lining 60, as described in page 2, lines 4-29 and shown in Figure 3 of Krzan, and not by “*releasably securing the set of rings to each other.*” This is an important distinction because by providing the set of rings to be releaseably secured to each other (such as by click-lock mechanisms) in the present invention, the space in the center can remain empty and clear (unlike Krzan) to position a suspected explosive device in the center and surround and protect against it.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that the 102 based rejection against independent claim 1 is overcome since each and every element in the claim

either expressly or inherently is not described in a single prior art reference, as required by MPEP §2131. Furthermore, Applicants submit that claims 5-6, and 8-12 are also allowable as being dependent on an allowable claim.

Similarly, independent claim 16 has been amended to clarify that each of the first and second set of rings are releasably securable to each other in the telescopically-extended configuration. In particular, claim 16 now includes the following amendments:

*"means for releasably securing said first set of rings to each other in the telescopically-extended upright configuration and said second set of rings to each other in the telescopically-extended upright configuration."*

And Applicants submit that claims 17-21 are also allowable as being dependent on an allowable claim.

Notwithstanding the above arguments, Applicants also respectfully submit with respect to claim 17 that Krzan also does not anticipate *"a bladder concentrically located in the annular gap region between the first and second sets of rings."* A closer reading of page 2, lines 4-29, and Figure 3 shows that the flexible sac or lining 60 of Krzan is inside the inner series of tubes, and not between the inner series and outer series of tubes.

#### Discussion of Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 2, 3, and 22 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Krzan in view of U.S. Pat. No. 3,739,731 to Tabor, and claim 4 as

being unpatentable over Krzan in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,376,489 to Clemens. Applicants respectfully submit that these rejections are also overcome as per above discussion, since the cited references do not teach or suggest all claim limitations as required by MPEP §2143.03 as follows in part:

*"To establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art"*

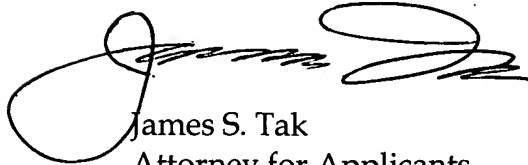
And similar to amended independent claims 1 and 16, independent claim 22 has also been amended to clarify the set or rings are releasably securable to each other in the telescopically-extended configuration. In particular, claim 16 now includes the following amendments:

*"means for releasably securing said set of rings to each other in the telescopically-extended upright configuration"*

#### Summary

Applicants therefore respectfully submits that claims 1-6, 8-12 and 16-22 are in condition for allowance, and requests allowance of claims 1-6, 8-12 and 16-22. In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of these claims that could be clarified with a telephone conference, he is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned at (925) 422-7274.

Respectfully submitted,



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